

Integrating LID with Development Practices

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What should jurisdictions consider in developing new ordinances or revising current regulations that integrate low impact development (LID) with land disturbance activities such as clearing and grading? One important aspect is not only integrating LID practices into local codes and ordinances, but also into the thinking of developers, contractors, inspectors, planning officials, and property owners who use them. While developing a clearing and grading technical guidance document and example code for the State of Washington, pitfalls and obstacles emerged, as well as opportunities for integrating LID into mainstream thinking and permitting approaches. The importance of identifying critical stakeholders and clearly defining a realistic process for their input and feedback was reinforced, as was the need to address all the interrelated components of the development permitting process (e.g. stormwater, vegetation management), and balance prescriptive and performance standards. Another important aspect of integrating LID is to identify where existing regulations may stand in the way of LID, and to look for commonalities among varying perspectives, some of which may be found in industry efforts such as the Master Builder's Green Building program. The authors will discuss WA's Clearing and Grading Technical Assistance Project, including lessons learned when developing state land-use guidance documents.